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WKU Student Affairs

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SHELBY MACK/HERALD

Bike4Alz is biking from International Falls, Minn., to Key West, Fla., over the course of two months this summer in order to raise money for Alzheimer's. The group members pictured are (front from left) Josh Amos, John William Owen, (back from left) Austin Lanter, Ben Harris, Dylan Ward and Will Garcia. They have ridden bikes all their lives, but it wasn't until they decided to go on this trip that any of them purchased road bikes or began training for a long-distance trip.

BIKE4ALZ

Fraternity brothers raise money for Alzheimer's

By MONICA SPEES
diversions@wkuherald.com

Louisville sophomore Will Owens had more on his mind than going to class and hanging out with newfound friends when he came to college.

"I wanted to leave college a better person than when I came in," Owens said.

When he became a member of Phi Gamma Delta fraternity, or FIJI, he found an opportunity to do just that.

From May to July 2010, several FIJI brothers rode their bikes from California to Virginia in "FIJIs Across America," a fundraiser for the Alzheimer's Association. The group raised \$56,000, half of which went to local Alzheimer's chapters, the other half going to national Al-

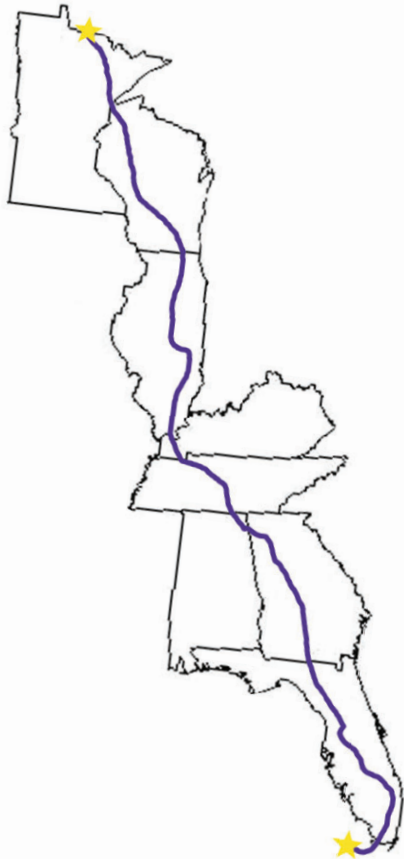
zheimer's research.

Owens and his fraternity have decided they want to revive the charitable ride for this summer.

From May 25 to about July 20, a group of FIJIs will bike from International Falls, Minn., to Key West, Fla., hitting 13 major metropolitan areas along the way and dedicating each day to someone who the disease has affected. This year's ride is called Bike4Alz.

Owens, who is in charge of media relations, said they decided to take the fraternity's name out of the title in order to dissuade people from being hesitant to give or thinking only FIJIs could participate. He said tacking a name onto the title was not the important element of the ride.

SEE MONEY, PAGE 2



WKU raises more than \$67K for St. Jude

By KAYLA SWANSON
news@wkuherald.com

Bowling Green mother Kim Cunningham knows firsthand that cancer never sleeps.

Cunningham's son, Robert, was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia at age 12 and spent 13 months at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tenn., to receive treatment.

When first arriving at the hospital, Cunningham was immediately struck by the "magnitude" of the facility.

"It's not an ordinary hospital," she said.

One of the first treatments Robert underwent was a bone marrow transplant. His bone marrow donor was his younger sister and Cunningham's daughter, Emily, who was two years old at the time of the transplant.

Robert lost his battle with cancer on July 26, 2010.

"She was his angel, and now he is hers," Cunningham said.

Cunningham told her son's story to students who attended the Up 'til Dawn finale on Friday from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. at the Preston Center.

Up 'til Dawn is a collegiate fundraiser for St. Jude. Students had to write 25 letters to friends and family urging them to support the hospital during a letter-writing campaign in order to participate in the finale.

SEE DAWN, PAGE 3

WKU looking to ease possible budget cuts

By CAMERON KOCH
news@wkuherald.com

A so-far-unchanged budget cut to post-secondary education has WKU exploring all options to ensure a stable transition going into the new biennium, which begins in July.

Gov. Steve Beshear's proposed state budget includes a 6.4 percent cut to all of post-secondary education, stripping WKU of about \$5 million. The budget has passed the House and is currently in the Senate.

President Gary Ransdell said WKU is looking at increasing revenue while at the same time cutting costs.

"By the time we finish this up in May, it will be a combination of both," Ransdell said. "We are beginning to determine what each division of the university will have to absorb."

Ann Mead, vice president for Finance and Administration, said WKU is optimistic that the budget will be implemented with minimal impact on students and instruction.

SEE BUDGET, PAGE 2

WKU student stars in television fashion show

By ZIRCONIA ALLEYNE
diversions@wkuherald.com

Strobe lights beaming, cameras rolling and the crowd roaring were all a dream to Louisville senior Joia Talbott two years ago.

But on Feb. 29, she stood backstage at the Hammerstein Ballroom in the Manhattan Center realizing her dream was now reality.

Draped in a chained, black and gold swimsuit from the Selita E. Banks collection, Talbott was ready to strut in Black Entertainment Television or BET's nationally-televised fashion show, "Rip the Runway."

"I just couldn't wait to get on the stage," she said. "Once I was on, I didn't want to get off."

The beat dropped, and hip-hop star Meek Mill rapped one of his latest tracks as the models took the stage.

Talbott sashayed down the catwalk in Louboutin stilettos.

However, this wasn't the first ballroom where she'd modeled — she was in WKU's Rip the Runway, produced by the Black Student Alliance. The show was held in the Garrett Ballroom.

Henderson senior Raemia Higgins said she saw Talbott in the show on campus and was captivated.

"When she hits the stage, she has your attention," she said. "It's not that you want to take your eyes off of her — it's that you can't."

Higgins, a design, merchandising and textiles major, had Talbott walk in her fashion show for Alpha Kappa Psi, a business fraternity.

"I knew she'd be great for the show because I'd seen her versatility in her pictures," she said. "She transforms into a high-profile, high-fashion model."

Talbott said she became interested in modeling in the fifth grade.

SEE MODEL, PAGE 7



ELIZABETH FRANTZ/HERALD

Louisville senior Joia Talbott has been modeling since the fourth grade. Her biggest break so far is an appearance on the show Rip the Runway, which airs Wednesday on BET. "With hopefully more to come," Talbott said.

a thousand words

Photo & Story by
JUSTIN PHILALACK



Kids involved in Parker Bennett Community Center after school program scream “Thank you” to the volunteers that helped them with their St. Patrick’s Day party. The five volunteers were WKU students helping with St. Patrick’s Day themed games. The event was open to the community, with about 40 kids ranging from five to 13 years of age.

“This is a safe place for kids, for parents who have to work,” said Omar Rogers, the Parker Bennett Community Center supervisor.

The center’s after-school program is designed to help parents who have no one to look after their kids during work hours.

“We try to make it a great experience for everyone,” said Sierra McKinney, one of four staff members.

With over 70 kids in the program, the staff uses many volunteers, including WKU students.

The staff and volunteers all have an impact on the children.

“This center gives a lot to kids who do not get a lot,” staff member Rose Clark said.

Rogers said that the community sees the center as a safe environment for the kids and a relief for parents so they can work without worrying about their children.

“We want the kids to have a safe, fun environment,” McKinney said.

BIKE

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

“People are kind of scared to talk about Alzheimer’s,” Owens said. “We’re trying to get people more comfortable with talking about it.”

The 12 riders participating in Bike4Alz have set their donations goal at \$175,000, which is \$100,000 more than FIJs Across America’s goal two years ago.

Louisville sophomore Will Garcia, whose job it is to plan fundraising and get sponsorships for the ride, admitted that the ride and the monetary goal are going to be challenging.

“We can’t decide which is

more intimidating, almost 3,000 miles or raising \$175,000,” Garcia said.

To make the ride more physically feasible, Owens and Garcia both said they have been training. Garcia said he’s been training with his dad for nearly a year.

“It’s good extra motivation, because you don’t like it when your 50-year-old dad is beating you up hills,” Garcia said.

Garcia said he and his mom stayed up at night over spring break to make Bike4Alz buttons that the fraternity will be selling for \$2 as a part of the fundraising.

Owens said his family has also been very supportive of his endeavor. At Christmas, they gave

him donations to go toward Alzheimer’s research.

Elizabethtown senior Tyler Jury first came up with the idea for FIJs Across America as a result of his own grandfather being diagnosed with Alzheimer’s in 2005.

“Alzheimer’s takes someone you love and alters their mind and turns them into somebody you don’t even know,” Jury said.

According to the Alzheimer’s Association, about 5.4 million people have the disease, and it’s the sixth leading cause of death in the United States.

Jury said he thought about several possibilities of things he could do to honor his grandfather, such as a 5K run in his home-

town. But it was on a trip to Japan in summer 2008 that Jury made a bucket list on which he included biking across America. He said the two desires merged into one.

When riding in 2010, Jury said the 3,200-mile trip was physically taxing, but the reason they were riding kept the group going.

“When we put our front wheel in the sand in Yorktown, there wasn’t a cure for Alzheimer’s, so we all said we still weren’t finished,” Jury said.

Although Jury can’t participate in the entire trip this year, he praised his fraternity brothers for continuing their work to better their community, something he said he encourages all of his brothers to do, even if it’s not

Bike4Alz.

Garcia said he hopes people can see that they’re not just biking for themselves or for their fraternity but also for WKU.

“I hope (Bike4Alz) builds into something the whole university can get behind,” Garcia said.

Owens said preparing for this ride has helped prime him for other challenges that may come his way later in life. He said he’s excited to have the chance to bike across the country for a worthy cause.

“I hope my ride can have the same effect on the guys coming up in the fraternity as FIJs Across America had on me and inspire them to do something great,” Owens said.

BUDGET

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

The university’s strategy, Mead said, is looking for ways to gain additional revenue, dealing with reductions in budgets across all departments and looking at how the reductions can be phased in using money carried forward from a previous year to ease the transition.

A department may only have to face half of the proposed reductions during the first year, Mead said. The other half would be covered

by the carry-forward money. The full budget reduction would go into effect the second year.

Specific actions and strategies will be discussed and finalized within the next few weeks, Mead said.

“We just have to survive another two years,” Mead said.

Ransdell believes the budget can be put into place without having to cut jobs, though he said it’s still a possibility.

“I think we can find a way to avoid layoffs and furloughs,” he said. “I’m cautiously optimistic that we can do it.”

CRIME REPORTS

Reports

■ Freshman Jaylen Pate, Keen Hall, and freshman James Lamar, Breckenridge, reported on March 18 that money was stolen from their room. The value of the theft is \$120.

■ Sophomore James Bingaman, Pearce-Ford Tower, reported his laptop and camera were stolen from his room. The value of the theft is \$3,500.

■ Freshman Cale Middleton, Barnes-Campbell Hall, damaged several exit signs on the third floor of Barnes on March 17. Police located an exit sign in Middleton’s dorm room closet. The value of the damage is \$500.

Arrests

■ Freshman Dylan Noel Peek, Keen, was arrested on March 18 and charged with driving under the influence under 21 years old.

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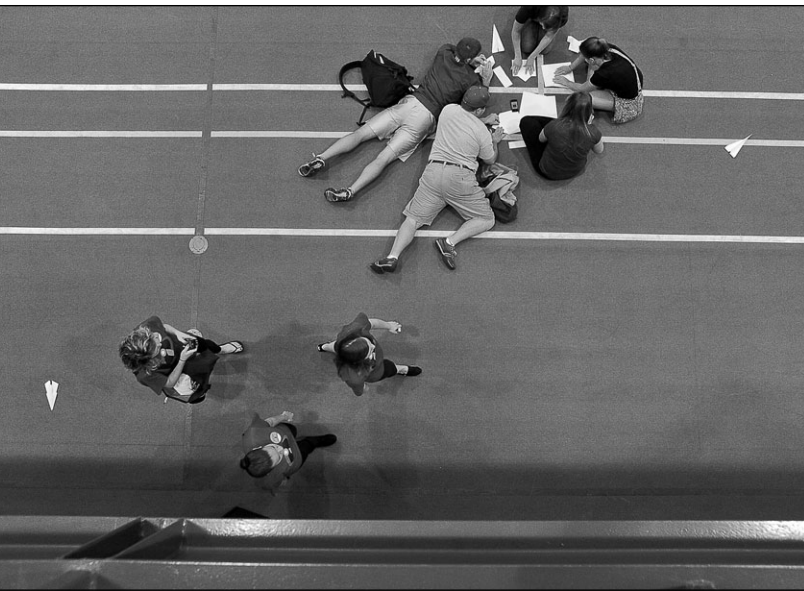
Online voting for Executive Officers and Senators:

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Go to the log-in page on Topnet to cast your votes!

Hilltoppers Vote!





CONNOR CHOATE/HERALD

Up 'til Dawn, an event for students who raised money for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, took place in Preston Center Friday night. Students who wrote 25 fundraising letters were allowed to take part in the event, which involved free food and games including a paper airplane contest.

DAWN

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Both Greek and non-Greek organizations attended the finale. Phi Mu sorority came because they like to support philanthropic events. "I feel like it's a very important cause. It's always important to support others in a difficult time such as cancer," said sisterhood chair and Owensboro junior Elizabeth Pickens. Louisville sophomore Meg McDonald, a Sigma Kappa, said her sorority found out about Up 'til Dawn through a fellow sorority sister.

McDonald's aunt was excited to find out that Sigma Kappa was participating because her aunt's boyfriend spent time at St. Jude as a child. "I think children are people

that need to be fought for because they can't fight on their own," McDonald said. Through the letter writing campaign and other fundraisers, Up 'til Dawn at WKU has raised \$67,431.28 and counting this year for the hospital. Over the 12 years that Up 'til Dawn has been at WKU, it has raised \$752,821.45. Students' fundraising efforts have not gone unnoticed. WKU is in the top three of the nation for their fundraising. Hollie Hayden, a senior event marketing representative with St. Jude, believes the number of people WKU has involved in Up 'til Dawn is the reason for their fundraising success. "A lot of universities have a lot of trouble getting people involved. Every year, WKU surpasses everybody because they get thousands of people to the

letter-writing and make it fun," she said. Hayden also hopes that by participating, students will be encouraged to work at St. Jude or participate in next year's executive board to help organize fundraising events and the finale. To help students stay awake, the Up 'til Dawn executive board hosted games, activities and entertainment for the students. The finale was not only a celebration of WKU's fundraising success, but also a chance for students to see what it's like to stay up for an entire night, something that St. Jude families do every night to take care of their children. "We like to bring a fun event to celebrate their efforts but remind them why they're here," said Bowling Green senior Gina Scenna, executive director of the Up 'til Dawn executive board.

UPike public bid falls through

By CAMERON KOCH news@wkuherald.com

The University of Pikeville recently lost its bid in the state legislature to join WKU as Kentucky's ninth public four-year university, but a new version of the bill still aims to benefit students in the area UPike serves. In its new form, House Bill 260 looks to offer students grants that will make the price of private universities in Kentucky's southeastern region, such as UPike, comparable to that of public universities. The grants would apply to students seeking bachelor's degrees at Alice Lloyd College, Union College, the University of the Cumberlands and UPike. The hope is to keep students from leaving Kentucky's southeastern region to pursue an education and never returning, UPike administrators say.

The bill has already passed the House with a majority vote of 89-7 and now moves to the Senate. Originally, UPike's move to a public university was to be paid for solely with coal severance dollars, money WKU is not eligible for. However, concerns arose as to how long a public UPike could depend solely on coal severance funds before also getting money from the state. The grants proposed in the new bill

will be funded by coal severance funds. "The state's not able to afford what we now have," President Gary Ransdell said. "It's just not practical to be discussing another public university to that financial equation." He said the bill in its new form serves higher education in Kentucky better than making UPike public. "I think it's a good compromise and achieves the goal of making higher education more accessible and more affordable in that region," Ransdell said. Robbin Taylor, vice president for Public Affairs, echoed Ransdell's statements. "As it stands now, HB260 provides students in those eastern Kentucky counties with some very good options for pursuing a four-year degree," Taylor said in an email.

Brian Wilkerson, communications director for House Speaker Greg Stumbo, said the compromise is good for now, but "there's still a very strong belief" that a public UPike would better serve the region. "If we can get this compromise passed, let's see how that does, and that may make the case for doing more down the road," he said. "It's the region's money going towards the region's cause."

—GARY RANDELL President

The state's not able afford what we now have. It's just not practical to be discussing another public university to that financial equation. "

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STAFF EDITORIAL

The golden tickets

WKU should find better ways to allot NCAA tournament tickets to students

THE ISSUE: Many students expressed frustration last week when they weren't able to purchase a ticket to see the WKU men's basketball team play the University of Kentucky in the second round of the NCAA tournament at the KFC Yum! Center.

OUR STANCE: WKU should find a better way to allot given tickets to students.

WKU students may have had a tough time coming across a ticket to the Toppers' NCAA Tournament game last Thursday against Kentucky.

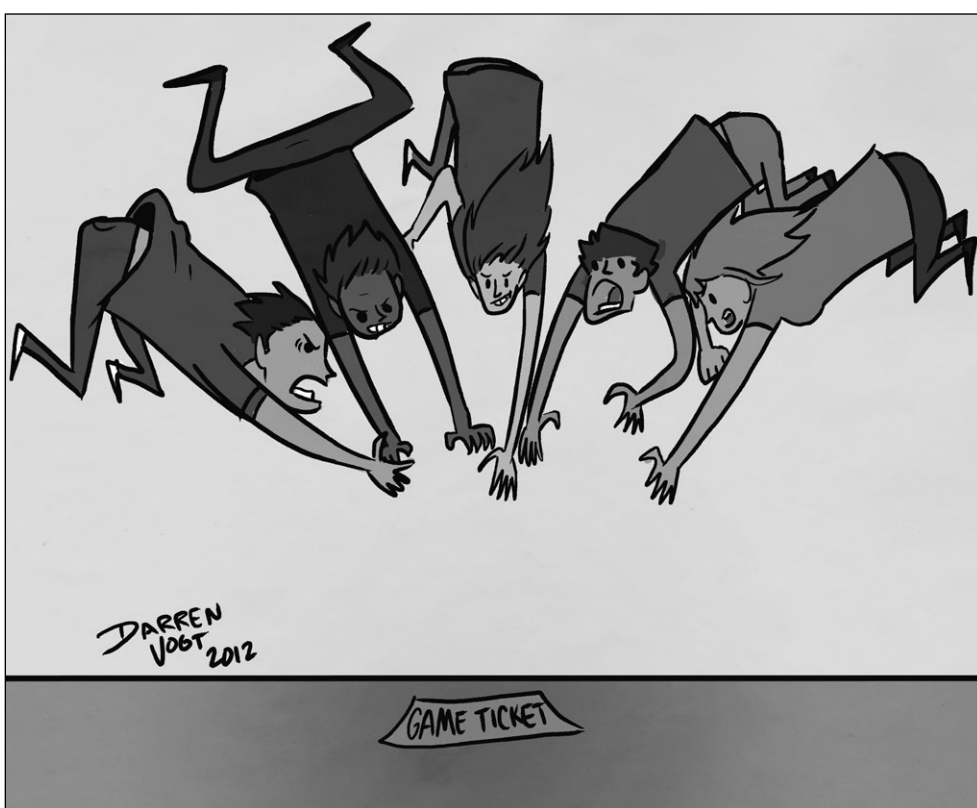
Many of the tickets had already been purchased by UK fans, and the rest were going for more than \$100 at the cheapest price. The chance of getting a ticket from WKU wasn't high since they didn't get many in the first place.

WKU, like the other eight teams playing in the first round of the tournament at that site, was allotted 550 tickets for the NCAA tournament in Louisville. Only 10% of those tickets were given to students — through a random lottery. The rest were given to Hilltopper Athletic Foundation donors and the basketball team.

The Herald agrees that season ticket holders and donors should be given first priority for postseason tickets, but when it comes to students there are ways WKU should and could improve.

There's a high likelihood that some of the students who signed up for the lottery hadn't been to many games this year. This is fine, but the students who attended home games this year should be given priority over the students who decided they suddenly wanted to support their team.

Another reason why the random lottery system doesn't work is because of UK's fan base at WKU. By allocating tickets with a lottery system, WKU runs the risk of giving its student tickets to students who might ac-



tually want the tickets to cheer for UK.

One way the Herald believes WKU can think of allotting tickets better is to scan the student ID card of each student who attended home games during the regular season.

When the NCAA tournament comes around, each student who attended home games can have that many respective entries in the lottery.

This way, all students can still enter the lottery, but the fans who supported the team the most will have an advantage.

The Herald also believes this way can work well for the Athletic Department because it would encourage students to attend more home games.

Senior associate Athletic Director Todd

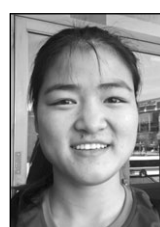
Stewart said WKU hopes to accommodate a higher demand in the future, and they should give the reasons listed above consideration.

While there is nothing WKU can do to change the number of tickets they are given, WKU can make it more fair to the students who supported their team during the highs and the lows of the season. Randomly picking a student can be a fair way to give out tickets, but supportive students should have some sort of advantage as well.

This editorial represents the majority opinion of the Herald's 10-member editorial board.

people POLL

Do you have spring fever?



REBECCA DAVIS
Bowling Green
Freshman

I do. I love it. I love being out in nature and taking it all in. It's much better than being inside.



NICK SIMMONS
Owensboro
Senior

Sure, it's not too cold anymore, and it's nice enough so you can walk around and enjoy the weather. It's nice to get some air finally.



CANDACE STEVENS
Danville
junior

Yes, it's getting pretty outside. I have a convertible, so I'm going to ride with the top down everywhere I go.

COMMENTARY

Vote Dodds SGA President to Address Student Concerns

The Student Government Association will be holding spring elections on March 27 and 28 on TopNet. I support Cory Dodds for Student Body President. Dodds has a record of service and accomplishments: A vote for Dodds is a vote for solutions to problems students face every day.

One program that Dodds is proposing is an evaluation system for graduate assistants and teaching assistants, similar to what WKU faculty and staff are subject to. I believe this is an excellent way to create accountability while also providing an excellent form of feedback for GAs and TAs. Currently, many of you receive grades and instruction from GAs and TAs across campus. Their teaching

and grading affect students' academic standings. However, there isn't a system of accountability for their work. GAs and TAs are also unaware of how they are performing on the job, because there isn't a system in place for evaluating, giving comments and feedback. GAs and TAs cannot be expected to improve



NICOLE STRATTEN
Graduate Student

their practices without knowing what is or is not working. This is vital for TAs, as many are on a track towards professorships, which requires an extensive amount of teaching. The feedback will allow these graduate students to modify and perfect their teaching methods to become better, more effective professors in the future.

As a graduate assistant, I would greatly appreciate feedback about how I am performing. I complete tasks for professors on a daily basis that include everything from organizing files to research to grading. Evaluations would provide important feedback about my performance that I can use to become an excellent researcher or employee in the future. Eval-

uations create accountability while also providing important feedback to make GAs and TAs the excellent professors or employees we all grow to love. WKU strives to produce successful graduates, and this is just one more step towards creating outstanding graduate students that any employer would be ecstatic to hire.

Vote for Cory Dodds for Student Body President to create accountability and successful futures for GAs and TAs while guaranteeing quality instruction in the classroom.

This commentary doesn't necessarily represent the views of the Herald or the university.



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The Herald encourages readers to write letters and commentaries on topics of public interest. Here are a few guidelines:

1. Letters shouldn't exceed 250 words. Commentaries should be about 500 words and include a picture.
2. Originality counts. Please don't submit plagiarized work.

3. For verification, letters and commentaries MUST include your name, phone number, home town and classification or title.
4. Letters may not run in every edition due to space.
5. The Herald reserves the right to edit all letters for style, grammar, length and clarity. The Herald does NOT print libelous submissions.
6. Submissions must be received by 7 p.m. on Sunday and Wednesday.

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TRIVIA TUESDAY

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tweets from the hill

@mitch_henson: Just picked up my cap and gown. The end of the beginning. #WKU -sent 3/19

@JBrown: Crunching some numbers w/ @HilltopperSID shows WKU out-scored opponents 93-37 in the last 5 minutes of its six post-season games. #Finishing -sent 3/19

@Smile_Kyla_Doz: Woman beside me is screaming nd the guy behind me is makin cat noises nd talkin to himself n the voice of squidward...just another day @WKU -sent 3/19

@Sanford_N_Son: Why are these classrooms so hot..Wku needs to get it together -sent 3/19

@tshain: I can't pay attention in class of it's hotter in the classroom than it is outside. #WKU #CherryHall -sent 3/19

@KernelK86: It was kinda fun walking to the beat of those drumlines hangin out on campus...but whurr did they come from? #wku #theunexplained -sent 3/18

@maddie_glenn: Wait...is that...the apocolyse?? No, dont worry, we just like to have random drum competitions on our campus. #wku -sent 3/18

ACROSS

1 Noisy bird
5 Part of a daisy
10 Nuisance
14 Unusual
15 Sidestep
16 Member of an old Montreal baseball team
17 Die-hard
18 Facelift for a home
20 Plead
21 Pig's comment
22 Trivial; minor
23 Gold bar
25 Oslo's nation: abbr.
26 Golfer Palmer
28 ___ City; capital of Nevada
31 Badger in jest
32 Modify
34 Actor ___ Diesel
36 Story
37 Sediment
38 "Arsenic and Old ___"
39 Everyone
40 River in Paris
41 Evans and Robertson
42 Great amount
44 Benefactors
45 Leprechaun
46 Nighttime coffee, perhaps
47 Cowboy's rope
50 Toot the horn
51 Passing craze
54 All-knowing
57 ___-of-the-valley
58 Amongst
59 Indoor stadium
60 Summit
61 Dimwit
62 Olympics prize
63 Clutter

DOWN

1 ___ Louie salad
2 Rant and ___; carry on
3 At first
4 Married
5 Sentence-ending dot
6 Happening
7 Combat vehicle
8 "Much ___ About Nothing"
9 Third book of the Bible: abbr.
10 Sellers & Falk
11 Way out
12 Blemish
13 Actor Danza
19 Toward the left side of a ship
21 Make eyes at
24 Face's central feature
25 Sleeps briefly
26 "___ boy!"; words of encouragement
27 Kingdom
28 Canary's home
29 Room in the White House's west wing
30 More pleasant
32 Too dry
33 Rec room
35 Loch ___ monster
37 Unable to hear
38 Actress Turner
41 Landing place
43 Dwell
44 ___ floss; teeth-cleaning string
46 Reed or Fargo
47 Burden
48 Bullets
49 Make a tiny cut
50 Pay attention
52 Charitable gift
53 Recolors
55 Machine wheel
56 Indignation
57 On the ___; fleeing

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19 Toward the left side of a ship
21 Make eyes at
24 Face's central feature
25 Sleeps briefly
26 "___ boy!"; words of encouragement
27 Kingdom
28 Canary's home
29 Room in the White House's west wing
30 More pleasant
32 Too dry
33 Rec room
35 Loch ___ monster
37 Unable to hear
38 Actress Turner
41 Landing place
43 Dwell
44 ___ floss; teeth-cleaning string
46 Reed or Fargo
47 Burden
48 Bullets
49 Make a tiny cut
50 Pay attention
52 Charitable gift
53 Recolors
55 Machine wheel
56 Indignation
57 On the ___; fleeing

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CAMPUS EVENTS

Do you have campus events you would like to be included in the 'TAKE A BREAK' calendar? Be sure to let us know! Email your events to editor@wkuherald.com

TU 20

Baseball vs. Belmont, Nick Denes Field, 6 p.m.
Last Lecture Series: Scott Taylor, MMTH Auditorium, 7 p.m.
Performance: Eve Ensler's The Vagina Monologues, part of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, Downing University Center Auditorium, Admission is \$7, 7:30 p.m.
Faculty Recital: Mark Berry, percussion, Music Hall's Choral Rehearsal Hall, Free Admission, 7:30 p.m.
Lecture: Responding to Climate Change in the Caribbean by Dr. Kenrick R. Leslie, executive director of Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre, Snell Hall, room 2113, 4 p.m.

W 21

Spring Job Fair, Preston Center, 11 a.m.
Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, part of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, 12 p.m.
Passport to Wellness Series: Tips of the Trade for Financial Aid, DUC, room 340, 5:30 p.m.
Research Week Keynote Lecture: How Climate Change Changed Civilization by Dr. Brian Fagan, Van Meter Hall, 7 p.m.
Softball vs. Kentucky, WKU Softball Complex, 7 p.m.
Creative Writing Reading Series: Eric Goodman, author of Twelfth and Race, Cherry Hall, room 125, 7 p.m.
Vocal Recital: Two Sides Resounding by Dr. Liza Kelly, Music Hall's Choral Rehearsal Hall, Free admission, 7:30 p.m.

TH 22

Imagewest 8-year Anniversary and Open House, MMTH, room 331, 9 a.m.
WKU Passport Day, DUC, room 341, 11 a.m.
University Senate Meeting, Faculty House, 3:45 p.m.
Gender Images Film Series: Waging a Living, Cherry Hall, room 125, 6:30 p.m.
Concert: WKU Chorale and Hope College Choir, First Christian Church, Free admission, 7:30 p.m.

F 23

Presidential Scholarship Interviews, Gary Ransdell Hall and Houchens Industries- L.T. Smith Stadium, 8 a.m.
Civil War Days for area schools, Kentucky Museum, 8:30 a.m.
2012 Mark of Excellence Competition Awards Ceremony, MMTH Auditorium, 9 a.m.
Board of Regents Committee Meetings, Martin Regents Room, MMTH, 1:30 p.m.
Baseball vs. FIU, Nick Denes Field, 6 p.m.
Performance: The Hundred Dresses, Van Meter Hall, Admission \$10 for adults; \$8 for 17 and under, 6:30 p.m.

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11/12

WKU TALISMAN

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Zeta Non-Greek Stroll Off



JUSTIN PHILALACK/HERALD

Zeta Phi Beta was the opening act at the Zeta Non-Greek Stroll Off at Downing University Center Saturday evening. The event raised money for Zeta. Teams performed a mixture of step and hip-hop dance moves. Dope Pack took the prize money as the winners of the event.

Fraternity uses corn hole to raise violence awareness

By MACIENA JUSTICE
diversions@wkuherald.com

“Throwing bags, not punches” was the tagline of a cornhole tournament that FarmHouse sponsored on Saturday. The fraternity held the event to raise awareness of campus assault after their brother, Dylan Nonweiler, was injured in a fight near campus on Jan. 29. Nonweiler, a junior from Owensboro, was left unconscious with brain swelling, according to a Bowling Green Police Report. “We want to bring awareness because lots of things go unanswered,” Sturgis freshman Riley Hall said. Hall said the fraternity came up with the concept of a cornhole tournament to bring violence awareness to campus. “Fight against fighting,” Hall said. According to Hall, the fraternity was hosting the tournament, along with selling T-shirts, hamburgers, hotdogs, drinks and chips. There were approximately 20 to 25

teams signed up for the tournament, and the entry fee was \$50 per team. Since Nonweiler’s injuries, he has accumulated many medical bills, so the tournament had a dual purpose of philanthropy. “All the money is going to Dylan,” Bardstown freshman Patrick Portman said. The tournament was a philanthropy stepping stone, according to Portman. “This is a place to start from and build off of,” Portman said. Sturgis sophomore Chris Hancock said six sororities and three fraternities participated in the tournament. Hancock also said the tournament had been organized very quickly, and they were happy with the crowd at the time. “Dylan is doing better but was unable to drive, but he wishes he was here,” Hancock said. FarmHouse wants to continue their philanthropy in campus violence so that they can continue to raise awareness about injustice.

More than 50 employers to be at WKU career fair

By Shelby Rogers
news@wkuherald.com

WKU students have an opportunity to expand their career options this week. Career Services Center is hosting its annual Spring Job Fair tomorrow in the Preston Center. Graduating seniors can attend the fair by invitation only from 11 a.m. to noon. There will be an open session for all other students from noon to 3 p.m. “Transitioning from college to career can be challenging, so let us help make it easier for you,” Rebecca Tinker, the center’s associate director, said in the event’s press release. Career Services recommends that all guests dress in “business professional” attire for the event, and have resumes ready to hand to potential employers. In the press release, Career Services Center calls it “the most important career-related networking event of the spring semester.” Robert Unseld, Career Services Center’s other associate director, stressed the

importance of “branding yourself.” “In today’s job market, it’s all about face time, which is what makes this Job Fair so beneficial,” Unseld said in the press release. “It allows our students and alumni the chance to network with potential employers and get their name out there. Your name is your brand — so brand it well!” Marion, Ky. senior Megan Heady, a public relations major, said that career fairs are important for students to attend, even if they don’t have a specific employer in mind. “These job fairs are really beneficial, even if your desired employer isn’t there,” she said. “It still helps you get face time and gets you out of your shell.” Currently, Career Services Center website lists more than 50 employers who will be represented at the job fair, including Fruit of the Loom, Bellarmine University, Bluegrass Cellular and Frito Lay Inc. Career Services Center also coordinates an annual Fall Career Expo and assists with resume building.

MODEL

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

“My mom put me in modeling classes because I was really shy,” Talbott said. She learned the fundamentals like runway walking and posing, which essentially built her confidence. In 2008, she signed with Cosmo Modeling and Talent Agency hoping to jumpstart her career. But after two years, Talbott realized she was being shortchanged. “I paid thousands of dollars for a comp card,” she said. “It was a complete waste of time and money.” So she took the reins and became her own agent by social networking with local models and photographers. Fellow model LaJarvis Evans, a sophomore from Columbus, Ga., said he was honored when Talbott reached out to him for a photo shoot. “I felt like I was modeling with a superstar,” he said. “When she gets big, I can say I modeled with her.” The pair did a steamy shoot that Evans said opened the door for him to do more modeling. Talbott said she’s learned it’s all about who you know. She booked many of her jobs through email, Facebook and Twitter. Talbott had the opportunity to become a

Victoria’s Secret Angel because of a photographer she knew but didn’t make the cut because of her size. “In this world, I’m skinny, but in that one, my thighs were too big,” she said. Talbott didn’t let it discourage her aspirations. “You can’t take it to heart because everyone has a look they’re looking for,” she said. “It just opened up doors to other opportunities.” Another modeling colleague recommended her to the Rip the Runway casting director in New York. She received an email a day before the auditions to go tryout but didn’t know how she was going to make it on such short notice. Her No. 1 supporter came through. “My mother held off on her mortgage to send me to New York,” Talbott said. “Not many parents would have done that.” She said her mother encouraged her to stay in school while modeling in her spare time. “There’s been many photo shoots I’ve had to turn down, because I have a test or can’t come up with the money to be where they want me to be,” she said. “But if you have a passion for something, you go for it.” When she graduates in May, Talbott wants to take on modeling full-time in New York. “I told my mom I want to go there for a month, and if that goes good, I’m staying,” she said. “I’m dreaming big here— I want to go as far as possible.”

REACH WEEK

RESEARCH EXPERIENCES AND CREATIVE HEIGHTS
WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY’S ANNUAL STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE IS EXPANDING TO INCLUDE A WEEK-LONG CELEBRATION OF RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT.



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2012
KEYNOTE SPEAKER | DR. BRIAN FAGAN
Archeologist/Author, Professor Emeritus at UC-Santa Barbara
6:00 p.m.-6:45 p.m. Meet and Greet with Dr. Brian Fagan (Van Meter Hall foyer)
7:00 p.m. “How Climate Change Changed Civilization” (Van Meter Hall auditorium)

SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 2012
42ND ANNUAL | WKU STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE
Gary A. Ransdell Hall 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Hundreds of WKU students present their research and creative endeavors through talks, posters, performances, and more at this annual event. Student abstracts are being accepted at wku.edu/studentresearch through February 24.

CONFERENCE SPEAKER | DR. WILLIAM TAD PFEFFER
Sigma Xi Distinguished Lecturer, Professor at University of Colorado
Gary A. Ransdell Hall Auditorium 4:30 p.m.
“Future Sea Level: Where Do We Go From Here?”

RESEARCH SHOWCASES

- | | | |
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| APPLIED RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS (TWO LOCATIONS, SAME ARTP SHOWCASE)
MARCH 19-22 Center for Research and Development
MARCH 23-24 Gary Ransdell Hall | GATTON ACADEMY OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE
MARCH 22 8:00 p.m. Florence Schneider Hall 4th floor
GORDON FORD COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
MARCH 23
2:00-4:00 p.m. <i>Grise Hall - State Farm Room</i> | ODGEN COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING
MARCH 23 3:30-6:00 p.m. Lobbies of Environmental Science and Technology, Engineering and Biological Sciences, and Thompson Complex Central Wing |
| COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
MARCH 22-23 2nd and 3rd floor of Ransdell Hall Atrium | HONORS COLLEGE
<i>Worlds of Research: Enriching Your Honors Experience</i>
MARCH 19 6:30 p.m. Gary A. Ransdell Hall 1074 | POTTER COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS
MARCH 17-23
see schedule at www.wku.edu/pcal |
| COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Authors present on March 23 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
MARCH 19-23 Academic Complex 2nd Floor Hallway | UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
MARCH 19-23 Tate Page Hall | |



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Canago at SKyPAC

Robbie Neighbors (left) and Craig Brown (right) perform as part of Canago at SKyPAC, a recently opened performing arts center in Bowling Green. This was the first in a series of performances by local bands at SKyPAC in an attempt to attract more college students.

PHOTO BY SHELBY MACK/HERALD

Three candidates vie for SGA president

By TAYLOR HARRISON
news@wkuherald.com

In just one week, students will get the chance to vote for a new SGA president in the spring elections. They'll choose the successor to current SGA president Billy Stephens on March 27-28.

The candidates for the election are varied in their experiences and ideology. One, Cory Dodds, is already on the executive board, while Corey Johnson is a senator. Austin Wingate has had three years of SGA experience, although he isn't currently in SGA.

CORY DODDS

Dodds, currently SGA's director of information technology, said he is running for president because his two years of experience in SGA have allowed him to gain insight into how SGA runs.

"I've been around for a while and I know what past

presidents have done — what did work well and what did not," Dodds said. "I can use that experience to implement a bunch of different changes in the SGA next semester to better serve the student body."

Initiatives Dodds wants to promote include scholarships for intramural sports, campus-wide teaching and graduate assistant evaluations, a new safe rides program and syllabus transparency. Syllabus transparency is an idea SGA has been working on for a while and would require teachers to post syllabi before courses start.

"I know what needs to be done, I know what services we offer, and really, the next few years are going to be very interesting for SGA and the student body because of the DUC renovations, and we need a strong leader as SGA president to ensure that we are able to continue to provide consistent service to the student body," Dodds said.

COREY JOHNSON

Johnson is currently serving as an SGA senator after being elected in fall 2011. Prior to that, he worked in the Student Activities Office over the summer. Johnson got involved in SGA because he was excited about what student government could do for the campus.

"I wanted a way to leave a meaningful impact on this university — to leave my mark on a place that has certainly left its mark on me," Johnson said.

However, Johnson said he expected SGA to be much more than it was. While he said he is proud of what they have accomplished over the past two semesters, he chose to run because he believes SGA needs "a wakeup call."

"I don't mean to discount the successes of this past year's SGA, but I think I can speak for the majority when I say that I haven't been blown away," Johnson said. "Where is Provide-

A-Ride? How do you let \$15,000 slip through the cracks?"

"...The pieces are all there — we just need someone in place at the top to put them all together and make them work for the students and I can do that for SGA," Johnson said.

If elected, Johnson said he would like to make SGA more visible on campus and more transparent — to communicate more effectively with students. He said he wants to work on initiatives like a dead week before finals, an improved course catalog, Provide-A-Ride, keeping the library open later during finals week and making parking meters on campus more consistent.

AUSTIN WINGATE

Wingate served in SGA for three years — two as a senator and one as the speaker of the senate.

"I decided to run for president after I felt that there was a loss of connection between the SGA

and the student populace here at Western," Wingate said.

This year, he was not in SGA because he was the president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on WKU's campus and felt he didn't have enough time to dedicate to both organizations.

"My greatest strategy that I'm going to implement during this campaign is my personality and getting out and meeting and talking to the people," Wingate said.

Wingate's main campaign platforms will focus on diversity outreach, scholar outreach, finding a way to make parking on campus better for students, and organizational and Greek outreach. He also wants WKU to utilize technology more — particularly, more professors using Blackboard.

"This campaign isn't about me or my opponents — this campaign is about the student body," Wingate said.

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Candidates for new WKU position awaiting results

By NATALIE HAYDEN
news@wkuherald.com

The search for WKU’s new associate provost for Graduate and Advanced Studies/associate vice president for Research is almost at an end.

The three candidates have all spoken at open forums and have met individually with Gordon Emslie, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, and Gordon Baylis, vice president for Research, along with other groups such as the graduate council and the research council.

The position is an expansion of the current dean of Graduate

Studies that WKU currently has to include deeper integration into research.

Emslie said the administration chose not to specifically define the position because they want to see what the candidates will do with it.

Merrall Price, associate dean of the University College and a member of the search committee, said the upper administration worked with the committee to create the position announcement and description.

According to the description, the duties are to develop and sustain a vigorous, diversity-focused graduate student recruitment program, enhance integration of research/

scholarly inquiry into the undergraduate curriculum and coordinate student-initiated research and creative activity, among other things.

Kinchel Doerner, current interim dean of Graduate Studies and Research at WKU, spoke at the first forum on Feb. 28. He said he would utilize his position to give more resources to students.

“I would like to see my office take more of a lead in helping students write,” he said. “Not only to write more correctly in terms of grammar and structure but motivating the student to get started early.”

The second candidate, Jennifer Keane-Dawes, spoke on March 1. She’s the current dean of Graduate

Studies at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

Keane-Dawes said that the position’s main role is to be an advocate for the students.

“The graduate school exists to serve as a bridge, to represent the interests of graduate students. Somebody has to speak up,” she said.

Bruce Landman, the current interim and founding dean of Mathematics and Science at the University of West Georgia, spoke on March 14. He said that he wants to see deeper integration between research and graduate studies.

“I believe that all graduate education, strong undergraduate

research and excellent faculty research are all mutually beneficial,” he said. “Each one, I think, supports the other two.”

Each candidate seems to fit well for what the administration is looking for, said San Diego graduate student Margaret Stringer, who is on the search committee for the position.

Stringer said that as a graduate student, the main thing she looks for in a candidate is the ability to listen to what students want, communicate with them and be their voice.

Price said the position does not have a specific announcement date, but the expected start date is July 1, 2012.

Award recognizes contributions to sustainability

By MICHAEL MCKAY
news@wkuherald.com

The Sustainability Committee is looking for nominations for students, faculty and staff who helped change WKU for the better.

Sustainability Coordinator Christian Ryan-Downing said the committee is looking for someone who has advanced sustainability at WKU.

“It can be anything from someone who developed a program of study, or it can be a staff person that’s figured a way to reduce energy consumption or, you know, come up with some innovative idea,” she said.

Associate professor Brian Sullivan was the first faculty member to win the President’s Award for Sustainability, which was created last year for students, faculty and staff to be recognized.

Sullivan incorporated sustainability and its relationship to business into WKU’s MBA program.

Sullivan said understanding sustainability has become an important part of doing business internationally.

“If you’re doing business in the EU, you have to be concerned about your carbon,” Sullivan said.

He said sustainability is already an important part of businesses.

“The process is well on its way — by the time you teach it in the MBA program, it’s a

well-established phenomena,” he said.

Nominations are due to the Sustainability Committee by May 5. The committee will narrow down the nominations and President Gary Ransdell will make the final selection.

Ransdell said the award is another way to recognize individuals “who are doing wonderful things in order to ensure a sustainable future.”

“We have to lead by example,” Ransdell said. “We need for our students and students who graduate from here to understand their responsibilities across this globe and to make it a sustainable environment in which future generations can find comfort and a high quality of life.”

Ryan-Downing said students also have a lot of ways to earn the award.

“Everything from sustainability and research to the students that were responsible for making us a fair trade university,” she said.

She said the award is about more than adding something to a resume.

“If you have won the President’s Award for Sustainability, then you have given something to WKU — you have left a legacy at your university that is significant and lasting,” Ryan-Downing said. “So it’s about more than just getting that award — the award is pretty cool, and the recognition at commencement is pretty cool — but just knowing that you’ve done something at WKU that has left it a better place is amazing.”

Leading climatologist to speak at WKU

By SHELBY ROGERS
news@wkuherald.com

WKU will receive a visit from an internationally renowned climatologist today.

Kenrick Leslie, executive director of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) and accomplished physicist and meteorologist, will be speaking today at 4:00 p.m. in Snell Hall 2113. His presentation is titled “Responding to Climate Change in the Caribbean.”

Leslie will be joined by Ulric Trotz, science adviser for the CCCCC, and Mark Bynoe, an environmental economist, who will present at various times during their three-day stay in Bowling Green.

The CCCCC is the leading authority on climate change information for the Caribbean. It services member countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, including Belize, Haiti, Jamaica and the Bahamas, according to CCCCC’s website.

Cheryl Stevens, dean of Ogden College of Science and Engineering, is looking forward to Leslie’s presentations and deepening a relationship between the CCCCC and WKU.

“We are looking forward to working toward establishing collaborative research projects with the CCCCC and identifying

sources of funding for these initiatives,” Stevens said. “We hope that this collaboration will provide some opportunities for students to participate in exchange and study abroad programs in the Caribbean and Belize.”

Leslie North, assistant professor of geography, is a member of the Hoffman Environmental Research Institute, one of the groups that is cosponsoring the climatologists’ visit.

“I’m so thrilled to be visiting with these men,” she said. “It’s truly an honor... Dr. Leslie is one of those people who can call the Prime Ministers of nations and just talk with them, no questions asked.”

North called the CCCCC “the U.N. for the Caribbean as far as climate change goes.”

“These men attend CARICOM meetings, making sure all the member nations are up-to-date on the latest on adapting to climate change,” North said. “The CCCCC covers all aspects of climate change — biological, economic, policies involved. The men visiting are a good representation of what the CCCCC does.”

After visiting with WKU students and faculty, Leslie, Trotz and Bynoe will speak at Bowling Green High School, as well as visit the school’s climate change fair, according to their itineraries for their stay in Bowling Green.

New online master’s program is first of its kind

By NATALIE HAYDEN
news@wkuherald.com

Jobs that may not exist yet could await graduates of WKU’s new online master’s degree.

The Sport Media and Branding program, which will be available in fall 2012, is a concentration within the already present Athletic Administration graduate degree and is the first of its kind, said Ken Payne, associate professor of public relations.

The program is innovative for many reasons, Payne said. It’s the first master’s program at WKU’s school of Journalism and Broadcasting and is also the first completely online master’s program focused on sports advertising.

“We certainly think we have a unique position in the marketplace right now, of being focused on media, focused on branding, focused on advertising, PR, in the sports arena, at the master’s level and delivered all online,” he said. “Those three things are very hard to find in programs right now.”

Payne said he believes the program will be preparing students for jobs that don’t yet exist, because the marketplace

for any type of branding is radically changing.

“People are still figuring out how to leverage all these tools and technologies to deliver the brand experience,” he said. “The fascinating thing for someone in this program is there may not be a job title for you yet. But I promise you you’ll get enough background in this program to go out there and be ready for the next level jobs that are being created right now in the marketplace.”

The program will be entirely online and will consist of 33 credit hours taken over five scheduled semesters, said Amy Fitzpatrick, coordinator of cohort programs for the Division of Extended Learning and Outreach.

“It’s a mixture of journalism courses and recreational and sport administration courses, so it’s a collaborative effort,” she said.

Fitzpatrick said right now the goal for the program is 15 to 20 students, but depending on the interest level, they could take the maximum number, which is 30.

There has already been a strong interest in the program, Payne said. Three students had already signed up for the

degree before he even knew it had been approved by Gordon Emslie, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, Payne said.

“The fact of the matter is sports and entertainment drive so much programming and writing today that it’s almost silly not to think of that when you’re developing something, because it’s so pervasive in the marketplace,” he said.

Fitzpatrick said that a few students from other states have already applied, and that possibly the program could go international someday.

Payne agreed, citing “Linsanity,” the recent global craze over the New York Knicks’ point guard, Jeremy Lin, as an example of why sport media and branding is a global career.

“To think that sport media and branding is United States-only is foolish,” he said. “It’s hugely international. And yeah, I hope we do see students from all over the globe. It’d be a lot of fun.

“What you’re seeing on the books now is just the first step — getting this thing launched up and running, and we have hopes that it will grow and develop over the years into something we can’t even imagine right now.”

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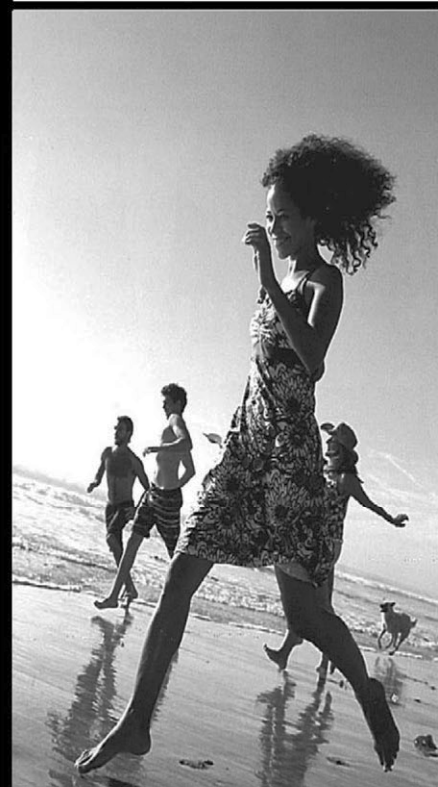


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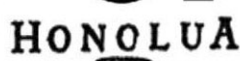
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WKU students tackle childhood obesity



Our goal with 'Make Your Move. Choose Your Food' is to reach out to the youth of our community and empower them with knowledge on healthy living so that they can make their own decisions with diet and exercise."

—Michelle Child
senior

By MARY ANNE ANDREWS
diversions@wkuherald.com

For five WKU students, serving the community coincides with a national competition and a capstone project.

Jane Wood, Caitlin Pike, Stephanie Romano, Mario Nguyen and Michelle Child spent February promoting a public relations campaign called "Make your Move. Choose your Food."

These students from the Journalism 454 and 456 capstone course were one of six teams from WKU entered in the PRSSA Bateman Case Study Competition. The contest was open to all members of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA).

Judging for this competition will begin April 21, according to their website, with the finalists attending a ceremony in Minneapolis, Minn., to present their case studies. The grand prize is a trophy and a \$2500 scholarship.

The campaign consisted of a series of events to raise awareness about childhood obesity among Bowling Green youth. These events were aimed at ages 7 to 16, with specific tactics to target the different ages.

One event was the Boy Scouts Personal Fitness Merit Badge Workshop, which gave local boy scouts the opportunity to start earning a fitness badge. Five boys who attended the workshop in Downing University Center on Feb. 25 began a 12-week process to earn the badge. After the workshop, the scouts had to fulfill requirements in healthy eating and exercise, and they had to track both.

During the first section of the event, Diane Sprowl, community health improvement branch director for the Barren River Health Department, gave a presentation on healthy snacks and healthy sugar levels and conducted a label guessing game.

In the second section, the PR students

helped the scouts do pushups, pull-ups, sit-ups and flexibility tests. They learned how to measure themselves and how to find their body mass index.

"All of them are really smart," Child said of the scouts. "They all know more than I expected, but some of them are surprised about the sugary drinks like Mountain Dew."

The PR students passed out nectarines as they explained the importance of eating five servings of fruits and vegetables every day.

"We all know that obesity is an epidemic that hits close to home," Child said. "Our goal with 'Make Your Move. Choose Your Food' is to reach out to the youth of our community and empower them with knowledge on healthy living so that they can make their own decisions with diet and exercise."

The case studies are based on a series of surveys. Vikki Bagwell is the teacher and advisor for the project. She said the surveys are a vital part of the competition because they show students how public relations affects perceptions in the real world. She said targeted groups are given a survey to weigh opinions and awareness about issues. Then after the event, they fill out a similar survey to see what changes occurred during the event.

"PRSSA is the premier pre-professional organization for public relations practitioners," Child said. "The competition gives students an opportunity to use classroom lessons in a real world setting."

Childhood obesity has tripled in the past 30 years, according to the 2012 Bateman project brief. This is why the PRSSA chose this issue — to help communities and to train students on the job.

"WKU plays a huge role in the Bowling Green community," Child said. "Our campaign is an outstanding example of positive community outreach."

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CONNOR CHOWATE/HERALD
Head Coach Willie Taggart talks to his offensive line Monday morning during the first spring practice of the 2012 football season at Houchens-Smith Stadium.

SPRING

CONTINUED FROM SPORTS

The stakes in the spring are higher though. Taggart said much of the starting lineup for the upcoming season, which begins with the Sept. 1 home game against the Governors, will be determined by how players perform over the course of the month.

“The way we’re going to do spring ball — it’s going to be a moving depth chart,” he said. “Guys aren’t going to go through and think they’re going to have a starting job. As coaches, we’re going to go ahead and grade every practice,

and if a guy doesn’t practice well, he’s going to move down the depth chart. We’re going to keep it competitive.”

The first practice of the season saw some key players return to the field for the Toppers. Sophomore quarterback Brandon Doughty, who tore his ACL against Indiana State on Sept. 17, and sophomore wide receiver Willie McNeal, who tore his ACL in spring practice last season, were both on the field taking reps on Monday.

Quarterback Damarcus Smith, a former four-star recruit from Louisville Seneca High School and Central Florida signee, is also now eligible for practice and did so on Monday.

Senior wide receiver Marcus Vasquez was not on the field. Vasquez tore his ACL during the Indiana State game and re-injured his leg while rehabbing it this winter.

WKU’s success last season breathed new hope into the program, which had recently floundered since moving to the Football Bowl Subdivision in 2007. Taggart said his team should be able to build on that success in 2012.

“Guys understand what we’re doing now, and they understand that it’s their job,” he said. “They don’t actually get paid physically, but it’s their job, and they’ve got to take control of their job.”

SNUB

CONTINUED FROM SPORTS

Jakes comes into the spring a returning starter from a team which went 7-5 in 2011. The quarterback job is firmly in his hands.

McNeal is 100 percent healthy, running routes and catching passes with ease.

And the defense, one of the Sun Belt’s best in 2011, returns several key contributors and now has the full-time services of sophomore safety Jonathan Dowling, a Florida transfer and former blue-chip recruit.

All in all, everyone in the locker rooms and coaches’ offices of Houchens-Smith Stadium is feeling pretty optimistic these days.

But for WKU to really get much out of spring practice, and the offseason overall, the Toppers need a little motivational kick in the pants.

And for that, they need only look to Dec. 4, the day last season’s bowl schedule was released.

72 teams were eligible. Two teams were left out. WKU was one of those on the outside looking in.

Players have used that as fuel for offseason workouts, which Head Coach Willie Taggart said was attended by 100 percent of his team.

“After last year we’re not going to make any excuses,” Taggart said.

The Toppers could’ve made a lot of excuses after the way last year ended.

They had an excellent year by their recent standards, finishing the season winners of seven of their last eight games.

But because of circumstances completely out of their control, they were stuck at home this winter watching teams they beat (Florida International and Louisiana-Lafayette) and teams they could’ve beat, on TV.

WKU players and coaches had no control over bowl contracts, which the team and its fans learned are often dictated by conference and TV politics as much as they are on-field performance.

What the Toppers can control is how they use this spring practice period to improve and prepare to accomplish the one feat that will ensure themselves a bowl berth: a Sun Belt championship.

“We didn’t succeed, basically, because we didn’t go to a bowl game,” Jakes said. “I think everybody’s mindset is to work harder. Every day it’s grind — every day.”

If WKU sticks to that motto this spring, they may be the ones bowling at the end.

OFFENSE

CONTINUED FROM SPORTS

Head Coach Tyra Perry said that the recent losses had been a shock for her team.

“We’ve been playing really tight,” she said “Once you lose and you’ve been winning, it’s really hard to play to win instead of playing to not lose. So we’ve been talking to them about staying loose.”

Despite a stronger effort from junior pitcher Kim Wagner, who got six strikeouts and gave up only one run, WKU fell in the second game 2-1.

Many of the players and fans in attendance felt the Lady Toppers were robbed of at least one more run in the sixth inning when junior catcher Karavin Dew was called out at home on a close play.

“I thought it was a very bad call,” Perry said. “I don’t think [the umpire] was paying attention and got surprised.”

What Perry, and many in attendance, thought was a blown call came at a critical moment with the

game tied at one.

Wagner would surrender a bases loaded walk in the sixth to break the tie, and the offense failed to push the tying run across in seventh despite senior outfielder Laura Smith being at third with one out.

Perry also said that the team had some bright spots in their performance despite the game not being their sharpest.

“It was just an off day for us,” she said. “We played well — but not well enough to win.”

The offense that had put up two runs in two games showed up for WKU in the third inning of the series finale on Sunday.

The Lady Toppers put up five runs in the third inning off of lefty pitcher Hannah Campbell. Smith, who had a key two RBI double, said the changes the batters made were mental.

“(Campbell) had eight strikeouts the other day and only had two today. We took her out of her game,” Smith said. “I think it was a complete mentality change.”



JEFF BROWN/HERALD

Sophomore pinch runner, Tiffany Gooch, advances to 3rd base after a base hit against South Alabama on Sunday afternoon at WKU Softball Field. WKU won 5-4.

The Lady Jaguars’ seventh inning comeback attempt came up short after scoring three runs to bring them within one. Wagner got the last two outs to end the game and get the close 5-4 victory for WKU.

Smith was encouraged by the win on Sunday and hopes they can prove they deserved to be ranked higher than where the pre season polls had them.

WKU will face in-state rival Kentucky at the WKU softball complex on Wednesday at 7 p.m.

“We know what kind of team we have, and we definitely don’t see ourselves as the 7th seed in the conference,” Smith said.

FUTURE

CONTINUED FROM SPORTS

WKU has a lot of filled seats to look forward to as well.

This season looked to be all but over after the Toppers started out 5-14, but thanks to a mid-season coaching change and an improbable postseason run, Diddle Arena is no longer a dormant building, and fan support is as high as it’s been in a few years.

“They’ve got a good program. I would imagine season tickets will sell out with what you saw because you’re playing three freshmen out there, playing young players,” UK Head Coach John Calipari said after Thursday’s game. “Their

freshmen gave us as much problems as anybody. So my hat’s off to Western.”

On the court will be a much more experienced team.

With four Sun Belt Conference Tournament games and now two NCAA Tournament games, one in front of a sold out KFC Yum! Center crowd, Harper said his players will know what to expect next March.

“As they go on in their careers, they can look back on this experience and really help any new guys that we may have in the program about how we do things and how we compete,” Harper said.

The tournament appearance didn’t come as a surprise to Gordon, who has talked about making the tournament even in his freshman year ever since he committed to WKU when he was a sophomore in high school.

Now his expectations are even higher, starting with appearances in the Top 25.

“We’ve got to keep doing what we’re doing and keep getting better and better,” he said. “We’ve still got three more years left, so it’s going to be big things ahead.”

With so much returning, next season may resemble what the last few weeks have looked like at WKU — lots of winning.

“I’m excited about where we’re going,” Harper said Thursday. “Obviously disappointed about tonight’s loss, but I couldn’t be happier to walk in that locker room with those guys. I’m going back with the right team.”

What’s coming back

- WKU will lose just one player, senior guard Kahlil McDonald, this off-season, returning the core of a team that won the 2012 Sun Belt Conference Tournament.
- Here’s a look at the amount of production the Toppers will return for the 2012-2013 season.
- 87 percent of scoring
- 88 percent of minutes played
- 86 percent of assists
- 94 percent of rebounding
- 89 percent of made free throws
- 97 percent of blocked shots
- 91 percent of steals

BASEBALL

WKU to play Belmont, Austin Peay

By KURT CARSON
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After going 1-2 in their Sun Belt Conference-opening series against Middle Tennessee State this weekend, the Toppers will look to get back on track against a couple of non-conference opponents.

WKU (8-11, 1-2) will take the field again at 6 p.m. Tuesday when it hosts Belmont at Nick Denes Field.

The Toppers are 17-17 all-time against the Bruins, with their last meeting on March 30 of last season resulting in a 9-8 loss for WKU.

Tuesday’s game will be the first of two matchups be-

tween WKU and Belmont as well as Austin Peay, WKU’s opponent on Wednesday.

The Toppers will head to Clarksville, Tenn., at 6 p.m. Wednesday for a visit with the Governors. WKU is 44-32 all-time in Clarksville against Austin Peay.

WKU will be looking to rebound from a rough weekend that left them with a losing record in Sun Belt play.

A solid outing by sophomore right-hander Justin Hageman and a grand slam from senior right fielder Ryan Hutchison led the Toppers to a 9-2 win in Friday’s series opener.

However, WKU dropped the final two games of the se-

ries by a combined 13 runs.

Saturday’s game was affected with four rain delays that caused the game to be suspended in the eighth inning and was left to be finished on Sunday before the series finale. The Blue Raiders maintained a solid lead from the third inning on that allowed them to win 7-2.

On Sunday, MTSU junior first baseman Ethan Williams hit three home runs that accumulated seven RBIs on the way to a 9-1 Blue Raider victory.

WKU will get back to SBC play this weekend when it takes on Florida International beginning at 6 p.m. on Friday.



JUSTIN PHILALACK/HERALD

Junior catcher Devin Kelly reaches for a tipped ball at the plate during their game against MTSU Saturday in Murfreesboro, Tenn. The series started conference play for the Toppers in which they lost two of their three games at MTSU.



FOOTBALL



Freshman offensive linemen Delryn Wilson, right, and Darrell Williams work on drills during their first spring practice of the 2012 season on Monday morning.

COLUMN

Bowl snub drives WKU offseason

By BRAD STEPHENS
sports@wkuherald.com

There wasn't a ton of buzz around WKU football spring practice last year.

The Toppers went into the 2011 spring after going 2-10 in 2010 in their first season under Head Coach Willie Taggart, making their record 4-32 since 2008.

Kawaun Jakes was having to fight to keep his starting quarterback job after a pedestrian 2010 season.

The team's most explosive playmaker, wide receiver Willie McNeal, was lost for the year after tearing up his knee early in spring practice.

And the defense was having to learn the system of new coordinator Lance Guidry, who took over when Clint Bowen packed his bags for Sun Belt Conference rival North Texas.

It's a night-and-day contrast to the state of the team which took to the spring practice field for its first practice on Monday.



BRAD STEPHENS
Upon Further Review
sports@wkuherald.com

SEE **SNUB**, PAGE 11

SOFTBALL

Offense struggles as WKU goes 1-2 against USA

By HASANI GRAYSON
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After suffering a sweep last season at South Alabama, WKU was looking for some revenge as it faced the Lady Jaguars at home this weekend.

But things didn't always go as smoothly as WKU hoped in the three-game series.

WKU (19-10, 4-2) started off the weekend at the WKU Softball Complex by dropping both games of a doubleheader against the Lady Jaguars (17-8, 5-1) on Saturday. But the weekend ended on a high note for the Lady Toppers as they were able to pull out a close 5-4 victory Sunday afternoon.

During the first leg of the doubleheader WKU was held hitless until the bottom of the fourth when freshman Preslie Cruce and sophomore Amanda Thomas hit back-to-back singles to start the inning.

Cruce would eventually come around to score on a close play in which she took advantage of a slowly hit ground ball by junior infielder Mallorie Sulaski.

That would end up being the extent of the scoring for WKU in that game. South Alabama, who was already up 3-1 after the Lady Toppers scored, would get two more runs off of sophomore pitcher Emily Rousseau in the seventh to win the game 5-1.

SEE **OFFENSE**, PAGE 11

First snaps of spring

Toppers focus on improving during first spring practice

By LUCAS AULBACH
sports@wkuherald.com

When WKU suited up and hit the field for the first time in months on Monday morning, everyone on the team shared the same goal:

"Get better," senior defensive end Quanterus Smith said. "We're just looking to execute better, play faster and just get better."

The Toppers' 2012 opener against Austin Peay isn't for another 165 days, but WKU is advancing through the stages of getting ready for the season.

Head Coach Willie Taggart said he could already see his team's commitment to getting better.

"Our guys, the way they come to work, you don't hear anybody complaining, moaning. They just come out here ready to go," he said. "Sometimes they come to me and say, 'Coach, you don't look like you're ready,' and that's a first."

Smith said it's good to see everyone on the team believing in their potential.

"It's a nice look for the team," he said. "It just feels good and nice to know that everybody's buying in, and we're going to get it done."

Part of the excitement comes from the way the team finished last season. The Toppers won seven of their last eight games to finish second in the Sun Belt Conference in 2011, finishing 7-1 in league play and 7-5 overall.

Yet WKU was one of two bowl-eligible schools that did not receive an invitation to a bowl game.

Senior quarterback Kawaun Jakes said a bowl berth would be a "reward" for a great regular season.

"Last year, it didn't seem like we got no reward for it, so our mindset is to try and get one," he said.

The spring practice period is the first opportunity for the Toppers to get together and practice on the field for the 2012 season. The team will meet 15 times over the course of the period, leading up to the Red-White Game, a public intrasquad scrimmage, on April 14.

WKU had previously participated in conditioning during the winter. Taggart said he had 100 percent attendance from the team for the conditioning for the first time in his coaching career.

SEE **SPRING**, PAGE 11

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Harper, Toppers excited for 'bright' future

By COLE CLAYBOURN
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Thursday's loss to No. 1 Kentucky in the second round of the NCAA Tournament ignited the start of the offseason in preparation for what looks to be a promising 2012-2013 season for the Toppers.

The only player set to leave is senior guard Kahlil McDonald, meaning WKU's top two scorers and rebounders — freshman guard Derrick Gordon and freshman forward George Fant — will be back to lead the offense.

With a full offseason to work with his young group, Head Coach Ray Harper is excited about what lies ahead for his team.

"The future is bright," Harper said. "We've got a lot of young kids ... and they have a foundation. Derrick and T.J. (Price) and George — you talk about three freshmen that just went up against the No. 1 team in the country, and they didn't back down one step."

Price, who torched UK for 21 points on Thursday, will return with a nine points per game average. That will be

complemented by junior guard Jamal Crook, who broke out of his shell this season, shedding his facilitator role to become more of a scorer and finish with an 8.5 points per game average.

WKU played nearly the entire season without the services of junior guard Caden Dickerson and sophomore forward Stephon Drane.

Dickerson, who led the team in 3-point shooting his first two years, nursed a sore shoulder all season before opting for surgery that sidelined him the rest of the season.

Drane, who played in 18 games during his freshman season, played just four minutes this season due to a strained posterior cruciate ligament that hobbled him since September.

Then, on Jan. 21, WKU lost freshman guard Kevin Kaspar for the rest of the season due to a torn ACL, limiting WKU's options at the point guard position.

Harper said he's excited all three players will be able to come back next season and be a part of the mix.

SEE **FUTURE**, PAGE 11



Freshman guard Derrick Gordon makes a pass during WKU's second round NCAA tournament game against Kentucky at the Yum! Center in Louisville on Thursday. UK won 81-66.

MICHAEL RIVERA/HERALD